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# PROCLAMATION

By

Governor Dwight H. Green



The fiscal year ending June 30, 1946 showed an alarming upsurge in fire loss in Illinois. The number of fires reported in the State was 15,935, an increase of 1,760 or more than 12 per cent from the previous year. The property loss outside Chicago was \$15,945,419, an increase of \$4,425,336 or more than 38 per cent. Deaths from fire were 377, an increase of 136.

This trend must be reversed. It is folly to burn homes, stores, factories and other properties, and badly needed food and consumer goods, when there are such serious shortages in all building materials and commodities. The fine self-discipline, with which Illinois held its fire losses in line during the war, must be restored.

Laws and ordinances, and the earnest efforts of fire officials in enforcing them, will not alone control fire losses. Almost every fire is the result of someone's carelessness. We must strive to develop in individuals a deep sense of personal responsibility to prevent fires—to be careful at all times with things which cause fire.

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To accomplish this purpose it is appropriate to set aside a week in which this important subject may be brought properly to the attention of the public.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DWIGHT H. GREEN, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby designate and proclaim the period from

*October 6 to 12, 1946*

To be Observed Throughout Illinois as

## *FIRE PREVENTION WEEK*

I urge that officials in every community put on programs during this week which will inform citizens of the simple causes of fires and stimulate their cooperation in preventing them. Effective use should be made of press, radio, movies, public meetings, demonstrations, displays and other means of dramatizing the subject and arousing public interest. These should be accompanied by inspections of important property. Inspection of homes and private premises by their occupants should be encouraged.

Particular efforts should be made to bring the lessons of fire prevention to school children. If they can be made fire conscious a great step will be taken toward making this State more safe from fire in the future. The assistance of school authorities is requested in this fertile field.

The causes of most fires are simple. High on the list are careless smokers, the No. 1 offenders. Unsafe electrical practices and equipment take a tremendous toll. Rubbish and litter ignite easily and spread fire fast. Careless use of gasoline and petroleum products is a major cause. This includes use of kerosene to prime fires in stoves, which takes many lives each year. Unsafe heating equipment and defective flues are a prolific source of fire.

While the remedy lies largely with the individual, a definite responsibility rests on fire officials to con-



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duct a constant program of fire safety. Schools, hospitals, theaters, public halls, hotels, institutions and other places where people assemble or are confined should be kept free from fire hazards and effective arrangements maintained for evacuation in case of fire. Employers have a responsibility to provide adequate fire safety.

The cooperation of press, radio, theater, civic organizations and public spirited citizens is requested. Officials in charge of State property are directed to make a special check during Fire Prevention Week and to maintain fire-safe conditions.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.



DONE AT THE CAPITOL, IN THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, THIS TENTH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND, NINE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIX, AND OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINTH.

*Dwight H. Green*  
Governor.

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## **GREAT OAKS FROM LITTLE ACORNS GROW**

So we were taught in school. **AND GREAT FIRES FROM LITTLE CAUSES GROW.**

A cigarette butt, carelessly discarded, may cause a conflagration costing thousands of dollars damage and many lives—and has.

So have other simple hazards. The name for all of them is **CARELESSNESS.**

A careful person is one of America's finest citizens. He will see:

That "smokes" and matches are cold before disposing of them.

That no rubbish or litter accumulates on the premises.

That all electric wiring is safe, worn cords discarded, fuses not tampered with, electric irons turned off before leaving them.

That furnaces and stoves are kept in safe repair, flues cleaned out, loose or soft mortar joints repointed.

That gasoline is not stored on the premises nor used for cleaning.

That kerosene is not used to start or prime fires.

That bonfires are built in safe places, never on windy days, and watched until out.

Probably **THREE-FOURTHS** of all fires would not occur if everyone observed these practices.

**DEATH AS WELL AS DESTRUCTION LURKS IN EVERY FIRE.** And fire is no respecter of persons.

**It's Smart to be Fire-Wise.**

JOHN H. CRAIG,  
State Fire Marshal.